United Nations A/65/PV.26

General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

26th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 5 October 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Deiss ..... (Switzerland)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 108 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/65/1)

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would first like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, contained in document A/65/1. At the outset, allow me to pay tribute and express my sympathy for all of the dedicated colleagues and United Nations officials and experts who lost their lives in different nations in the past year.

I would like to limit myself to some of the major issues in the Secretary-General's report that we found worthy of mentioning. One of the most important parts of the report addresses creating a stronger United Nations. On this issue we share the vision of the Secretary-General that:

> "The Organization is more than just a collection of buildings, a sequence of meetings, a set of reports and consultations" (*A/65/1, para. 165*).

But we believe that this is one side of the coin when it comes to strengthening the United Nations. We are also of the view that the Organization stands for its commitments to the peoples of the world through its principles and programmes as endorsed and adopted by its Member States. The United Nations Charter asks the Secretariat to observe the principles and carry out the programmes in a thorough and impartial manner.

If we consider multilateralism to be at the core of the United Nations, then the United Nations should be considered as an Organization that is owned and run by its whole membership, as is well symbolized in the General Assembly. The ownership and conduct of its work are envisaged through the three main pillars of United Nations activities as clearly defined in the Charter and reaffirmed by Member States in several international agreements. Those need to be treated in a balanced manner and seen as an integral part of the Organization's agenda.

In this sense, it is expected that promoting the role of the General Assembly as the most representative policy-making organ of the United Nations will be placed at the top of the agenda of this report, owing to the need to enhance multilateralism. However, in our view, that has not received proper attention in the report, despite improvements made during the past year through the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly. The Working Group approved by consensus the enhancement of the role of the General Assembly. In fact, the revitalization of the General Assembly as an integral part of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations is a dynamic and continuous process. Thus, we should remain constructively committed to this ongoing process, with a view to strengthening the role and authority of the Assembly.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

10-56786 (E)

Please recycle

The tendency to overemphasize some areas at the expense of others will harm the equilibrium of United Nations activities and thus its image as an Organization that works for all. Regrettably, the substantive part of the report reflects the existence of such imbalance in United Nations activities in the areas of development and global partnerships to strengthen the United Nations role in the international financial and economic system in the aftermath of the crisis.

We align ourselves with the view expressed by the Secretary-General on the negative impact of the ongoing economic and food crises on human rights. In much of the developing world, national development efforts to provide a better life for the people have lagged under the weight of such crises. We believe that the response of the United Nations system to these challenges should also embrace the acknowledgment of the right to development. Furthermore, we share the report's concerns over the increasing incidents of xenophobia and discrimination against non-citizens.

On the issue of peacekeeping operations, we welcome the news that the number of United Nations peacekeeping missions is not going to substantially increase in the future and that it is time to consolidate and deepen our work on existing ones. If this prediction is to be considered as a basis for United Nations policies and action on peacekeeping in the coming years, it is incumbent upon us to make every effort to ensure that expanding peacekeeping processes in different targeted countries and regions is the result of close consultations among major stakeholders, including the General Assembly, the Secretariat, troop-contributing countries and representatives of host countries.

Furthermore, due attention should be paid to the fact that all strategies and policies of the Secretariat concerning the issue of peacekeeping should be the product of an open and inclusive dialogue with the relevant United Nations intergovernmental bodies, especially the General Assembly and its Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

It is also important to note that a number of United Nations peacekeeping operations have been created following acts of military aggression against certain nations and the illegal occupation of their lands. In that regard, all three existing United Nations peacekeeping missions in the Middle East, namely, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, were initiated after a certain regime illegally and forcibly occupied the lands of three other nations in the region.

Needless to say, the only way to lead these missions to a successful conclusion is to put pressure on the occupying Power and force it to accept the will of the international community, as reflected in dozens of United Nations resolutions, and to withdraw unconditionally from all occupied lands. This is among the main prerequisites for the establishment of a lasting and durable peace in the region.

With regard to developing new concepts in the report, we should avoid entertaining and even artificially prioritizing vague, undefined and controversial notions that are still under review and consideration by the general membership, such as the concept of the responsibility to protect or of global goods. No doubt, the international community must be vigilant not to let the horrors of mass killings and genocide of the past be repeated in the future. This should not, however, be done in a manner that prejudices the established principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in their internal affairs.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the notion of the responsibility to protect needs to be further discussed and clearly defined and refined. The debates held on this notion thus far clearly indicate that there are still many questions and concerns surrounding this concept, which need to be addressed. Having said that, we cannot endorse the way this notion has been referred to in the report. We therefore expect the Secretary-General to reconsider the format of future reports, to maintain their devotion to the three main pillars of United Nations activities.

My delegation, along with many underrepresented developing countries, continues to be concerned about the failure of the Secretariat to meet equitable geographic representation goals vis-à-vis its staff, in particular in senior management positions. We continue to urge the Secretary-General to engage his Office to this end and improve the international character of the Secretariat.

Finally, we welcome the cooperation of the United Nations with regional organizations, taking into

account the principles and objectives of the United Nations as enshrined in the Charter. We also call for expanding the geographical scope of such cooperation in a way that incorporates all active and willing regional organizations, including Asian regional organizations, in particular the Economic Cooperation Organization in the West Asian region.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its thanks to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for having submitted his annual report to the General Assembly (A/65/1) on the work of the Organization. We appreciate the good offices of the Secretary-General, which enabled the reactivation of the office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General on the Border Controversy between Guyana and Venezuela. A distinguished Jamaican, Mr. Norman Girvan, was appointed to that post to encourage dialogue on the dispute between Venezuela and Guyana over the Guyana-Essequibo territory.

Despite what is stated in the report of the Secretary-General, the global financial and economic crisis of capitalism continues to intensify. That crisis was caused by financial speculators, with the complicity of the world's most powerful Governments and the Bretton Woods institutions.

We believe that the United Nations should promote a development model based on values such as solidarity, justice, social inclusion, equality, respect for human rights and citizen participation.

Venezuela calls for the reform of the Security Council, which requires an immediate expansion in its membership to include representatives of countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Venezuela demands the elimination of undemocratic privileges related to the use of the veto, which were inherited from the Second World War and the Cold War.

Venezuela also demands that the General Assembly, as a body that is representative of all countries, reclaims its rightful role, which has been usurped by the Security Council. We also call for the direct and universal participation of all countries on an equal footing in the selection of the Secretary-General.

According to Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Secretary-General and the staff of the Secretariat "shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any other authority external to the Organization". It is clear, therefore, that the Secretary-General should represent the entire Organization and ensure that the interests of powerful countries are not imposed on the most vulnerable. We believe that it is not appropriate to attempt to introduce into the work of the Organization agreements reached at other forums for negotiation, such as the Group of 20 or the Group of Eight.

Venezuela's aspiration is that the upcoming summit on climate change to be held in Cancún later this year will reach a legally binding and ambitious agreement that scrupulously respects the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, which some wish to ignore.

The Secretary-General states in paragraph 108 of his report that, in the framework of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, "Important progress was achieved in building a broad political consensus that can invigorate global negotiations". He also states, in the next paragraph, that negotiations on climate change should "build on the elements of agreement that emerged from Copenhagen". Alarmingly, however, he makes no mention of the Kyoto Protocol.

We wish to recall that the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, expressed the disagreement of the member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America with the undemocratic manner in which the Copenhagen Accord was adopted.

It is of concern that the report of the Secretary-General includes the concept of the responsibility to protect, all the more so if it is seen, in the words of paragraph 85, as a "prerequisite[] for the promotion of human welfare" and as "permit[ting] the realization of a stable polity". In resolution 63/308, Member States agreed to continue evaluating and considering this concept. We wish to emphasize that the concept of the responsibility to protect is still under discussion by Member States. It is therefore questionable that there already exist in the United Nations offices and staff dedicated to promoting the concept. We wonder what resolution gave the mandate for that.

The concept of the responsibility to protect is a sophisticated variant of humanitarian intervention, which has already been rejected in this forum. This

concept erodes the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Without these principles, developing countries would be at the mercy of the schemes of imperialist Powers, which seek to impose their economic, political and military interests, often by force.

The head of State of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, has declared that

> "here is a group of countries that believe themselves superior to us in the South, to us in the Third World, to us the underdeveloped — or, as the great writer Eduardo Galeano has said, we the countries crushed as if by the train of history".

It is therefore regrettable that there are imperialist countries that believe themselves to be the repositories of moral greatness, truth and freedom, and disrespect the historical, cultural and religious truths of other nations.

The United Nations as it is today reflects the unfair and inequitable power relations that exist in the world. We have already said so. It is time to re-establish the United Nations. It is time to prevent the Organization from continuing to be a tool of powerful countries. It is time that it expresses the interests of all countries, especially developing countries.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/65/1. South Africa is of the view that the debate on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization is an apt way to start our activities in the General Assembly, as it allows us to take stock and reflect on the work we are doing as an Organization, both as Member States and as the Secretariat.

I wish to refer to the conclusion of the Secretary-General that

> "The Organization is more than just a collection of buildings, a sequence of meetings, a set of reports and consultations or even a set of principles and programmes. Fundamentally, the Organization is about its people" (*A/65/1, para. 165*).

If indeed the Organization is about its people, it should always reflect in its decisions and their implementation the interests of the people, especially the poorest of the poor.

There are many important issues highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General. But I will highlight only three, namely, the implementation of commitments, climate change and international peace and security.

We have just concluded a successful High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Summit, in which our leaders recommitted themselves to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. In this regard, it is crucial that international cooperation be enhanced and global partnerships strengthened in order to achieve all eight MDGs by 2015. We repeat our call to all Member States to fulfil their commitments, especially developed countries.

We hear too often of very generous pledges being made, but the implementation of those commitments is lacking. Commitments and pledges are taken seriously by recipient Governments, which seriously rely on them in their programmatic efforts to deliver much-needed services to their peoples. For example, we have taken note that the report of the Secretary-General states that fewer than half of the member States of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have met their target of donating 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income to the least developed countries.

Of equal concern to my delegation is the projected official development assistance (ODA) shortfall of $16 billion committed to the African continent at the Group of Eight meeting at Gleneagles in 2005. The Secretary-General correctly observes that, "A decade of deep commitment to reform and political and economic stability is beginning to have an impact on Africa's development path" (ibid., *para. 32*). However, the report also notes the special needs of Africa and the impact that the decline in ODA and reduced economic growth rate will have on addressing these needs and challenges in Africa and on our hard-won stability.

We cannot agree more with the Secretary-General when he states that "Africa's people need neither pity nor charity" (ibid., *para. 35*). In this relation, we need

support and tools to address the challenges that face us, not only to improve the lives of all the people on our continent but also to ensure sustained stability and economic growth. It is South Africa's long-standing position that the world cannot fully progress and achieve its potential if Africa is left behind. We remain committed to the goals and objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and we will continue to promote them during our participation at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly and its Main Committees.

One of the major challenges also identified in the Secretary-General's report is climate change. The issue of climate change is among key issues on the agenda of this Organization. We note the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure that participation in the climate change discourse is a strategic imperative for world leaders. My delegation supports the Copenhagen Accord, which contains the elements for a political agreement within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and can serve as the basis for a dual-track negotiating process. We should build on the gains already achieved and enhance the momentum so as to arrive at a legally binding agreement at the Conference on climate change to be held later this year in Mexico.

All our efforts towards sustainable development will only have marginal impact if we cannot ensure peace and security for our people. The Secretary-General has correctly stated that the duty to maintain international peace and security through prevention, containment and the resolution of conflict is enshrined in the Charter of this Organization and is an integral part of its work. My delegation has noted with satisfaction the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Organization to assist with preventative diplomacy, including through mediation efforts and initiatives such as post-conflict peacebuilding and capacity-building, especially in Africa and the Middle East. While progress has been recorded in the efforts of the United Nations to work with the African Union in support of peace efforts on our continent, much more still remains to be done in implementing the Prodi report on Chapter VIII of the Charter.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. That resolution asserted the inalienable right of countries and peoples to complete freedom, the universal respect for human rights and the right to self determination. South Africa regrets the fact that the promise contained in the United Nations Charter and that resolution has not been fully realized in Africa with respect to Western Sahara, the last remaining colony on the continent of Africa. The people of Western Sahara are entitled to fully exercise their right to self-determination and deserve nothing less. In that regard the United Nations must play a meaningful role in ensuring that the people of Western Sahara exercise their right to self-determination.

The United Nations must continue to work towards the attainment of a lasting and peaceful settlement in the Middle East. While the first few rounds of direct Israeli-Palestinian talks held during September 2010 appeared to demonstrate a clear intention by both parties to effectively move the peace process forward, my Government has noted with serious concern that the partial moratorium imposed by the Israeli Government in November 2009 on the further construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian West Bank has not been renewed. We call on the Israeli Government to honour its previous international commitments by putting an end to all further settlement construction in the Palestinian West Bank indefinitely. In so doing, Israel would demonstrate its serious intention to bring about the establishment of a viable and fully independent Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with Israel within internationally recognized borders. The people of Palestine have for too long had their dreams dashed by half-hearted measures and by each new peace process that fails to deliver a viable and fully independent Palestinian State.

In our view, the Organization is in desperate need of reform in order to be more effective and efficient in responding to matters relating to international peace and security. In this connection, we must continue our efforts to revitalize the General Assembly.

We acknowledge the increased cooperation between this body and the Security Council and encourage the Organization to continue to strengthen its efforts to respond to matters of international concern, including peace and security. We do not wish to see the General Assembly usurp the mandate of the Security Council, but we do believe that the Security Council — working hand in hand with the General Assembly — can respond more effectively to international crises.

We believe that a comprehensive reform of the Security Council is necessary and urgent. Africa and Latin America have waited too long to gain permanent representation. The Security Council must therefore expand in both its categories, especially the permanent one, in order to redress that historical injustice.

We have just completed the general debate segment of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. The theme for the debate was "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance". South Africa reiterates its commitment to the principle of multilateralism and the central role that the United Nations plays in global governance. As Member States, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that all the principal organs of the Organization are focused on addressing the needs of our people, especially the most vulnerable.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for their services to the Organization, and we convey to the Secretary-General, the Secretariat, the President of this Assembly and all Member States our commitment to ensuring that we progress closer to our shared goal of achieving a better world for all.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): First of all, I would like to add my voice to those thanking the Secretary-General for his report (A/65/1). Thailand had studied the report carefully. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that the global recovery we are experiencing is fragile and uneven and that it requires political will and leadership to enhance the well-being of all, especially the poor and the vulnerable.

Thailand believes that multilateralism is not an option but a must, if we are to realize our common goals. The United Nations, with its universal membership, can and should do more to provide global leadership and coordinate global actions. In that regard, as reflected in the statement of Thailand's Foreign Minister during the general debate, Thailand will continue to be a strong supporter of the United Nations in pursuing our common goals, consistent with the principles enshrined in the Charter. Furthermore, through our active participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other multilateral forums, we will ensure that that message resonates within our region and beyond.

Thailand would like to take this opportunity to share our views on some issues that we feel are critical. First, on development, we are concerned that the impacts of the recent global financial and economic crisis may derail progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in many countries around the world. The recent global financial crisis reminds us that development should be measured, not by nominal growth numbers, but rather by its ability to achieve balanced, inclusive, green and integrated growth, where extra care is given to the disadvantaged and the vulnerable. In that connection, Thailand encourages the United Nations to accelerate its efforts to promote achievement of the MDGs by 2015, with people-centred development, moderation in consumption and optimal use of resources as guiding principles.

Of the eight MDGs, we feel that international cooperation, as called for in MDG 8, is most crucial to ensure the realization of the MDGs by 2015. International cooperation must be demand-oriented. It should take into account local conditions and facilitate transfer of knowledge and technology. Additionally, regional cooperation, as well as enhanced partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional groups, should further accelerate the achievement of the MDGs.

In South-East Asia, ASEAN integration, through enhanced connectivity of physical infrastructure, institutions and people, is expected to narrow development gaps and promote local socio-economic empowerment. Furthermore, the entry into force of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization Agreement and the creation of a regional economic surveillance mechanism are two notable examples of regional cooperation aimed at helping to ensure economic growth and resilience. While committed to a strong and fully integrated ASEAN, Thailand continues to call for and promote closer and action-oriented partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, especially on social and economic development.

Secondly, on peace and security, Thailand commends the efforts of the United Nations in the past year in the areas of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We would like to stress that close consultations between the United Nations and concerned Member States, as well as ownership in both the process and the outcome, are crucial to achieving sustainable peace on the ground. Any intervention by the United Nations should be guided by the needs and consent of the host country.

Regarding disarmament, Thailand commends the Secretary-General for convening the recent high-level meeting on revitalizing the work of the conference on disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations and hopes that the Conference will soon make progress on substantive issues. We also reiterate the call for expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament and the appointment of a special coordinator on expansion of the membership of the Conference for 2011.

Thirdly, human rights form a core principle of the Thai Government and its foreign policy. We believe that only engagement and dialogue can make a real impact on improving people's lives and can ultimately help pave the way towards peace. The creation of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights reflects our region's determination to promote and protect human rights. United Nations support for that effort can further advance the cause of human rights within the region and beyond.

As the report by the Secretary-General rightly states, women are one of the greatest forces for positive change in the world. In that regard, Thailand welcomes the creation of UN Women and is confident that, under the leadership of Her Excellency Ms. Michelle Bachelet, marked improvement in global gender equality and women's empowerment will be made.

On a related note, Thailand also commends the United Nations initiative to ensure more equitable gender representation within the United Nations system.

For our part, Thailand has done what it can to contribute to international human rights norm-setting, an example of which has already been recommended by the Economic and Social Council for adoption at the current session of the General Assembly. Through the initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol's draft United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders, soon to be submitted by the Third Committee to the Assembly for adoption, we hope that the specific needs of women prisoners, not only in Thailand but also in correctional facilities throughout the world, will be catered to.

Fourthly, on the work of the Organization, Thailand believes that Member States should be closely consulted and kept informed about the work and initiatives of the Secretariat, United Nations mandate holders, agencies, funds and programmes, on a regular basis and in a transparent manner, especially when changes involve the creation of new mandates, the expansion of existing mandates, the initiation of new concepts and the definition of their application. Without a common understanding on the way forward and the direction of the Organization and without general support of the United Nations membership, despite good intentions, such changes could bring unintended consequences and might be detrimental to the overall work of the Organization.

Lastly, Thailand agrees with the Secretary-General that the United Nations must adapt to the new environment by becoming more efficient, effective and more accountable, while at the same time ensuring coherence and coordination among all relevant agencies in the system. Nevertheless, the United Nations cannot, and should not, do everything. The United Nations must prioritize its work and responsibilities and work closely with Member States and partners in all of the various sectors.

Mr. Elshareef (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to express our deep thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization, as contained in document A/65/1. We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General across a range of areas, especially now that our world is facing various challenges.

The report mentions what has been achieved by the Organization in many fields, such as work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals. However, there are great disparities between countries in that respect, and in order to realize the MDGs, the international community must fulfil its commitment to expedite progress towards that end.

In the area of peacekeeping, we underscore the positive cooperation and the valuable contributions of the United Nations through its two Missions in the Sudan, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan — especially for their contributions during the elections held last April, among the various international efforts taking place in the country. We also appreciate the announcement and the will shown by the United Nations and the international community to cooperate in order to ensure the success of the

referendum on self-determination in Southern Sudan to be held in January 2011.

On this occasion, we call on the United Nations and the international community to fulfil their promises to support all of the efforts to implement the remaining parts of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and to support the peace process in Darfur. In this respect, we commend the constructive cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, on the one hand, and my country on the other hand, with a view to overcoming all of the obstacles and to enhancing constructive consultations between the Sudan as the host country and all of the participating parties in order to fulfil the mandate of the Mission. Here, I am referring to the various meetings of the tripartite mechanism, which comprises the United Nations, the African Union and the Sudan and last met here in New York on 27 September 2010 to discuss the situation of the Mission, with the participation of the Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan and the representatives of the African Union. In that context, all of the participants at that meeting commended the spirit of cooperation shown by the competent authorities in my country in assisting in the implementation of the Mission's mandate, and stressed the need to strengthen mechanisms for cooperation and consultation.

We also wish to note that, by virtue of that cooperation, Mission deployment has now passed 80 per cent, and marked improvement has been seen in the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur.

With reference to what is mentioned at the end of paragraph 54 of the report of the Secretary-General under consideration:

> "restrictions on the freedom of movement of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur continued to hamper the Operation's ability to implement its mandate" (*A/65/1, para. 54*).

This situation is the result of incidents that affect some of the work owing to the prevalence of criminals, bandits and members of the rebel movements, which have splintered. This requires certain security precautions to be taken in order to safeguard the interests of the Missions, as well as their personnel, and of other humanitarian organizations working in Darfur, so that they are not subject to kidnapping and any aggressive acts against them and their property.

My Government reaffirms its commitment not to hamper the work of the Mission and reiterates its commitment to cooperate fully with all parties and stakeholders concerned to fulfil the mandate of the Mission. We also wish to stress that negotiations in the peace process are continuing in Doha, Qatar. From this rostrum, we reiterate our invitation and call upon the United Nations and the international community to exert pressure on the rebel movements that have refused to participate in the Doha peace negotiations to ensure that peace prevails throughout Darfur.

In conclusion, allow me to emphasize my country's principled position to achieve peace and to conduct the referendum on the date stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. We also call on the international community and the United Nations to fulfil their obligations to the peace process and support the negotiations in order to achieve stability in my country. We reiterate our thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for all of the efforts exerted in the various fields covered in the report.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Chullikatt (Holy See): The past year has seen an increase in the number of challenges, both at the United Nations and within the greater global community, but my delegation remains hopeful that this Organization will respond to its Charter responsibilities and commit itself to taking decisive action in fulfilling its purposes as spelled out in Article 1.

Today, as the international financial and economic crisis is beginning to show signs of recovery, many of the poorest within society still remain beyond the reach of its benefits, and an additional 64 million people will fall into extreme poverty by the end of the year. This challenge calls for a new focus by the international community and a return to authentic humanitarian programmes and financial systems that place people at the centre rather than forcing them to serve the programmes and systems.

The financial crisis has proved to be a growing challenge to the efforts of developed countries to fund their official development assistance commitments and at the same time provide programmes to rebuild and

renew their own financial and labour markets. While that challenge is real, it is not insurmountable, if nations would move resources from programmes designed to destroy to those that foster life and development. This task is in fact within the capacity of the Members of this noble Organization.

In 2007, $1.3 trillion was spent globally on arms and other military expenditures, and that figure increased in 2009 during a global economic crisis to over $1.5 trillion. The limitless ability to find funds for military programmes highlights yet again the need for individuals and governmental leaders to refocus their priorities and financial commitments.

Those expenditures are even more troubling when we consider the facts that over 1.4 billion people in the world live on less than $1.25 per day, even though this could be remedied; that universal primary education remains unattained, even though that too could be addressed; and that access to clean drinking water and sanitation continues to go unmet, even though the capacity to provide remains within our grasp. Midway to the ambitious goal of 2015, as we discuss the need to find adequate funding sources for the Millennium Development Goals, we must acknowledge that transferring financial resources from military programmes to those that promote long-term sustainable development has become an urgent matter. Such spending demonstrates that development, peace and security are inherently interlinked.

While United Nations efforts to engage in preventive diplomacy and respond to crises have provided some welcomed successes, those successes will prove to be only temporary if governmental leaders and the United Nations bodies are unwilling to find ways to fulfil their responsibility to protect and give all nations an effective voice directed towards the betterment of all members of the human family.

The increasingly interconnected nature of the international community requires an international political authority that is capable of focusing international cooperation and responding to economic crisis in such a way as to avoid deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that could result. It must also seek to bring about integral and timely disarmament, food security and peace, guarantee protection of the environment and regulate migration. Such a body must be regulated by the principles of just laws, subsidiarity, solidarity and pursuit of the common good, while at the same time making a commitment to secure authentic integral human development inspired by the values of charity in truth — a truth that respects every member of the human family.

Promoting human and economic development and greater cooperation between States also requires a commitment to fundamental and authentic human rights that respect the true nature of the human person. Chief among those rights is the fundamental right to life. Population measures and health services that fail to recognize the right to life and the right to establish and raise a family undermine the inherent dignity of the human person. Concepts of reproductive health and sexual rights that incorporate access to abortion or other forms of life-destroying services or research foster the flawed logic of a culture of death instead of one that respects and embraces life and a better more sustainable future of humankind.

In addition, human rights must recognize the inherent social and spiritual nature of the human person and respect the rights of individuals to practise freely their faith. Religious freedom encompasses more than the mere toleration of religion and religious beliefs but also requires the freedom to worship and express one's faith publicly within society. In that light, religious intolerance and violence in the name of religion or in the name of God must be condemned. It is therefore important that concepts such as the defamation of religion be re-examined so as to ensure that religious intolerance and incitement to violence are rightly condemned without hindering the right to genuine religious freedom, which is beneficial to all.

The need to extend universally humanity's ability to care for one another is also an important means for allowing global neighbours to become worldwide brothers and sisters. In that regard, my delegation calls for universal solidarity in favour of those most in need. Today, international emergencies around the world receive financial and technical assistance from all corners of the globe. As the response to the earthquake in Haiti and the floods in Pakistan demonstrates, the international community, when it has good intentions and commits itself, can make the world a smaller place, capable of caring for people in any corner of the globe.

In coordinating those responses, the United Nations system and national political leaders play an important role in ensuring that aid reaches those most

in need in the most effective manner possible. However, that coordination must also recognize the particular role of local and faith-based providers in responding to emergency situations. Those organizations' long-term commitment to and activity within affected communities provide understanding of local needs and foster respect for local customs and traditions.

The United Nations has made important contributions to fostering development and greater peace and security. However, the Organization must continue to revitalize its work, so as to be more capable of responding to the future needs of the international community in a manner consistent with the purposes as set out in the Charter. During the past year the United Nations system responded to a number of difficult humanitarian emergencies, the International Criminal Court nearly finalized an amendment on the crime of aggression, progress was made on nuclear disarmament, and negotiations on an arms trade treaty began. However, those welcome developments were accompanied by the lack of a final outcome from the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, the lagging global financial recovery, continuing nuclear proliferation in defiance of national and global security, and ongoing violence in many corners of the world. The Holy See reiterates its commitment to the principles and ideals set down at the foundation of the United Nations and will continue to work to ensure that the Organization will increasingly serve as a sign of unity between States and an instrument of service to the entire human family.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization contained in document A/65/1?

It was so decided.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its agenda item 108.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.